

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR  
BUSINESS PLANNING AND OPERATIONAL STRATEGY  
CONSULTING SERVICES**



**RFQ ISSUED: May 17, 2017**  
**RFQ DEADLINE: June 7, 2017**

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**ABOUT PDP**

Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership (PDP) is a dynamic, nonprofit organization comprised of business and community leaders, property owners, civic organizations, foundations, and residents who provide energy, vision, and advocacy for Downtown Pittsburgh. Working collaboratively with its partners, the PDP strives to create a positive Downtown experience for residents, workers, and visitors alike. The PDP's strategic initiatives include clean and safe services, transportation, economic development, and advocacy. For more information, visit [DowntownPittsburgh.com](http://DowntownPittsburgh.com).

**SCOPE OF WORK**

The PDP is leading a consortium of public and private partners to reposition a building located at 604 Liberty Avenue as a retail incubator and maker space. The building, owned by the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh, has been vacant for a minimum of 15 years and has significant budgetary gaps for redevelopment by private interests. At the gateway to the Cultural District and Market Square, the building provides an opportunity to create an authentic and vibrant retail experience with established regional maker businesses that wish to expand sales opportunities into an urban market place.

With financial support from the philanthropic community, the PDP, or an entity to be formed, will purchase and rehabilitate 604 Liberty Avenue to meet current building standards. The PDP envisions 604 Liberty Avenue as an innovative and highly curated retail environment and incubator that allows local craft businesses to sell their wares, network, and partner with other businesses. A strong connection to the maker community of the Pittsburgh region exists through the work of the Craft Business Accelerator, a project of Bridgeway Capital. The need for highly visible retail space, light manufacturing, and gallery space with minimal barriers to entry has been identified as a need through conversation with the CBA and participating businesses.

Conceptual retail market ideas are focused on established makers within low-tech product categories including art and engineering:

<b>Art</b>	<b>Engineering</b>
Design, Screen Printing, Jewelry, Accessory, Ceramics, Glass	Textiles, Organic Cosmetics, Home Goods, Woodworking, Furniture, metalwork, 3-D printed consumer Products

The PDP wishes to partner with one or multiple organizations for the operations and curation of the retail and maker space in 604 Liberty Avenue. As such, we seek responses from qualified and experienced professional service firms to define and articulate an appropriate business plan and operational strategy. The strategy process will research and address market demand and capacity for the proposed retail incubator and maker space, including the operational mechanisms and marketability of the project. The consultant will also identify for-profit and not-for-profit models to serve as case studies for successful operations in this space. Efforts will be focused on the following areas:

- Define ways to support makers' growth strategy and operating model, including but not limited to the following considerations
  - Identifying established makers to support; understanding current operations, gaps, opportunities, and aspirations to grow, particularly retail scaling
  - Key partners to support makers with vision for retail operations
  - Market and customer analysis and value proposition
  - Consumer needs and perceptions of maker products and alternatives
  - Infrastructure needs including interior design and layout to meet user demands
- Composition of business/operational model including proposed ownership, operational structure, and potential partners, including but not limited to the following considerations
  - Best suited ownership structure and what existing entities exist to operate/curate retail experience and maker space
  - Market analysis including ideal mix of tenants, services, and inventory
  - Collective brand positioning to reach and activate target customers
  - Financial modeling for years one and two of operations

We are interested in the delivery of a final product that incorporates best practices from similar facilities and ventures around the country. The chosen consultant will be asked to think through partnership opportunities with locally based existing national businesses such as American Eagle Outfitters, Dick's Sporting Goods, GNC, PPG Paints, ModCloth, Schoolhouse Electric Supply, and others to engage their expertise in retailing and merchandising.

The selected firm will be expected to present recommendations to the PDP Board of Directors and/or project advisory committee. The final scope of work will be negotiated and modified as necessary with the firm deemed most qualified.

### **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Additional relevant information and documents:

- Letter of Interest signed by signatory official of company
- Demonstration of familiarity with subject area through prior relevant experience
- Detail of deliverables and methodology for project
- Explanation of why PDP should select firm
- Expectations of services or assistance to be provided by the PDP
- Organization and staffing overview including project lead/s
- Proposed budget with details for carrying out project including a not-to-exceed total for our consideration
- References and/or work products for similar scopes

## **SUGGESTED SCHEDULE**

RFQ Released by PDP	May 17, 2017
RFQ Responses due to PDP	June 7, 2017
Begin Project Work	June 2017
Project Completion	August 2017

## **SUBMISSION DELIVERY**

Responses are due by **4:00 p.m. on June 7, 2017** and must be submitted electronically via email to:

Brian Kurtz  
Director of Economic Development  
[bkurtz@downtownpittsburgh.com](mailto:bkurtz@downtownpittsburgh.com)

General questions and requests for information must be submitted via email to Brian Kurtz. Phone calls will not be accepted.

## **GENERAL NOTICES**

It is the intent of the PDP to select from all respondents the firm that best meets its needs as described in this RFQ. The PDP assumes no liability for any costs incurred by those who respond to this RFQ or further requests for additional information.

Final price will be negotiated with the selected firm who will service in the capacity of an independent contractor for this project. The selected firm must be able to provide proof of general liability insurance for the entire duration of this project.